

4.0 CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to measures and restrictions presented in the individual RMPs, the following recommended conservation measures may further reduce potential effects to bald eagle behavior and their habitats. These recommended measures were prepared in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

1. When project proposals are received, BLM should initiate coordination with the USFWS at the earliest possible date so that USFWS can advise on project design. This should minimize the need to redesign projects at a later date to include bald eagle conservation measures, determined as appropriate by the USFWS.
2. Appropriately timed surveys in bald eagle habitats should be conducted prior to any activities and subsequent authorization that may disturb bald eagles or their habitats. A qualified biologist (not limited by job title) would be approved by the BLM to conduct such bald eagle surveys. All nest surveys should be conducted using procedures that minimize the potential for adverse effects to nesting raptors.

In the event species occurrence is verified, the proponent may be required to modify operational plans, at the discretion of the authorized officer, to include the appropriate measures for minimization of effects to the bald eagle and its habitats.

See **Appendix C** for a description of appropriate survey methodology.

3. Each year BLM should verify the status of known bald eagle nests, communal winter roosts, and concentration areas on lands administered by BLM. As a matter of maintaining inventory information, BLM should coordinate annually with USFWS, WGFD, and other appropriate entities to determine the status of known and new bald eagle nests, communal winter roosts, and other concentration areas. Known bald eagle nests, communal winter roosts, and concentration areas will be assumed active if status has not been verified.
4. Activities and habitat alterations that may disturb bald eagles will be restricted within suitable habitats that occur within bald eagle buffer zones (see Appendix D for detailed descriptions).

Zone 1 (within ½ mile 1 February to 15 August) is intended to protect active and alternative nests. For active nests, minimal human activity levels are allowed during the period of first occupancy to two weeks after fledging.

Zone 2 (within ½ - 1 mile from the nest) is intended to protect bald eagle primary use areas and permits light human activity levels.

Zone 3 is designated to protect foraging/concentration areas year-round. Zone 3 would include one of two larger areas, depending on habitat types: a) 2.5 miles extending in all directions from the nest or b) ½ mile from the streambank of all streams within 2.5 miles of the nest. Site-specific habitat types and foraging areas will be evaluated to determine which Zone 3 buffer applies. Zone delineation depends on habitat types. Exceptions may be made after consultation with USFWS.

5. Activities that may disturb bald eagles will be restricted within 1 mile of known communal winter roosts during the period of November 1 – April 1. No ground disturbing activities will be permitted within 1 mile of active roost sites year round.

6. BLM-administered lands that are within 1 mile of an integral part of bald eagle habitats including nests, communal winter roosts, and foraging/concentration areas should not be exchanged or sold.
7. Power lines should be built to standards identified by the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC 1996).
8. Proponents of BLM authorized actions should be advised that roadside carrion can attract foraging bald eagles and potentially increase the risk of vehicle collisions with bald eagles feeding on carrion. When large carrion occurs on the road, appropriate officials should be notified for necessary removal.
9. BLM should coordinate with APHIS - Wildlife Services Division to minimize potential impacts to the bald eagle and its habitats from pest/predator control programs that may be included in the local animal damage control plan. USFWS should also be included in this coordination.
10. Proposed and future water projects should not be designed to discharge into drainages or reservoirs occurring within 500 feet of county roads and highways. This measure is intended to minimize vehicle collisions with wildlife, using the water source and subsequent eagle-vehicle collisions.
11. BLM should provide educational information to project proponents and the general public pertaining to the following topics: appropriate vehicle speeds and the associated benefit of reduced vehicle collisions with wildlife; use of lead shot (particularly over water bodies); use of lead fishing weights; and general ecological awareness of habitat disturbance.
12. In the event a dead or injured bald eagle is observed, the USFWS Wyoming Field Office (307-772-2374) and the USFWS Law Enforcement Office (307-261-6365) should be notified within 24 hours of the discovery.
13. BLM should coordinate with other agencies and private landowners to identify voluntary opportunities to modify current land stewardship practices that may impact the bald eagle and its habitats.
14. BLM should monitor and restrict, when and where necessary, authorized or casual use activities that may impact bald eagles or their habitats, including, but not limited to, recreational mining and oil and gas activities.
15. BLM should periodically review existing water quality records (e.g., WDEQ, WGFD, USGS, etc.) from monitoring stations on, or near, important bald eagle habitats (i.e., nests, roosts, concentration areas) on public land for any conditions that could potentially adversely affect the species. If water quality problems are identified, the BLM should contact the appropriate jurisdictional entity to cooperatively monitor the condition and/or take corrective action.
16. Projects with the potential to disturb bald eagles should be implemented in the least amount of time and during periods least likely to affect the bald eagle.
17. Projects with the potential to disturb bald eagles or their habitats should be monitored, and the monitoring results should be considered in the design and implementation of future projects.